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OFFICE



City Hall, 920 Broad Street, Room 214
Newark, New Jersey 07102
(201) 733-8004
Pamela Goldstein, Director

PRESS RELEASE

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

PLEASE CONTACT: PAM GOLDSTEIN (201) 733-6368

Mayor Sharpe James today announced the creation of the Mayor's Advisory Committee on the Homeless and named as its chairman retired Newark businessman, Philip Kurens.

The Mayor said he chose Kurens, a founder and former president of Art Metal Company, "because of his previous involvement in private/public partnership activities designed to improve the quality of life for all Newark residents."

James stressed, "In recent years, far too many decent and affordable housing units have disappeared or deteriorated in the City of Newark, leaving large numbers of residents living under poor housing conditions, often paying a disproportionate share of their income in rent.

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"For the poorest, the predictable effect of this disappearance and deterioration is to push many into homelessness--a problem that has reached crisis proportions in the city at this time," he maintained.

Because of these conditions, the Mayor contended he needs a person with Kurens' "knowledge, sensitivity and understanding of this crisis to work with other citizens in advising me on structuring a policy for the homeless.

"I believe you would bring a wealth of talent in addressing this American tragedy," James told the new chairman.

Kurens, a former member of the Board of Directors of the Urban League of New Jersey, was an early recipient of an award given by the organization to companies that best exemplified equal opportunity.

In addition, he is a former member of the Young Presidents' Organization, a group of individuals who become president of large companies prior to their fortieth birthday; the World Business Council, and The Occupational Center of Essex County.

Kurens said, "Mayor James has directed me to work with representatives of the public and private sectors in trying to address what has become a very difficult situation.

"The Advisory Committee will attempt to develop a plan to reduce the numbers of homeless in this city, to improve their lifestyle, and, in doing so, to make living conditions better for all Newark residents," Kurens said.